18

NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDS COMMISSION [NHPRC] REAUTHORIZATION

Y 4.G 74/7:H 62/4/993

National Historical Publications an...

HEARING

BEFORE THE

INFORMATION, JUSTICE, TRANSPORTATION, AND AGRICULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

JUNE 23, 1993

Printed for the use of the Committee on Government Operations

JAN 24 1994

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NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDS COMMISSION [NHPRC] REAUTHORIZATION

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23, 1993

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
INFORMATION, JUSTICE, TRANSPORTATION,
AND AGRICULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room 2247 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Gary A. Condit (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Gary A. Condit, Karen L. Thurman, Craig Thomas, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, and Stephen Horn.

Also present: Robert Gellman, chief counsel; Aurora Ogg, clerk; and Dan Naatz, minority professional staff, Committee on Government Operations.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN CONDIT

Mr. CONDIT. We are going to go ahead and get started. We have Members who will be joining us in a few minutes. Some of them are over giving 1-minute speeches.

The purpose of today's hearing is to consider the reauthorization of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The NHPRC promotes the preservation and publication of the papers of outstanding citizens as well as other documents of importance to the Nation's history.

Since there does not appear to be any great controversy about the reauthorization, we can use today's hearing for an update on the work of the Commission. The Executive Director, Gerald George, will be testifying along with Trudy Peterson, the Acting Archivist of the United States. Dr. Peterson has the delicate job of steering the National Archives during the period between the resignation of Mr. Wilson and the confirmation of a new Archivist. Based on what we have heard to date, she is doing an excellent job.

Also with us today is our colleague, Representative Phil Sharp, the congressional Representative on the Commission. So with that, we will let Mr. Sharp testify.

STATEMENT OF HON. PHILIP R. SHARP, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA, ACCOMPANIED BY RAYMOND W. SMOCK, HISTORIAN, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. SHARP. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Mrs. Thurman. I appreciate your giving me a few moments. I have brought with me Ray Smock who is the Historian of the House of Representatives because he works with the Commission as well. I am the Speaker's appointee and Ray, while I am there and in my absence, backs me in the Commission.

I want to take a moment of your time. I think you are familiar with the work of the Commission. Just to reemphasize its importance, it is of course headed currently by Dr. Trudy Peterson, who led a session recently and did an extraordinary job, and has as an Executive Director Gerald George, who I think everybody on the Commission has been extremely impressed by. And Ray Smock, I think the House Members have been very proud of his work both there and here.

Let me say that the National Archives is an extremely important institution that obviously doesn't command a great deal of public attention compared to all the controversies that go on. Fortunately, people like yourself are willing to focus on it.

I am sure the Acting Archivist can tell you about the enormous difficulties they have financially especially with new electronic records and what not. The NHPRC performs a vital role which some people miss because they assume we have the National Archives, and the National Archives' central role of course is to preserve all the kinds of documents the Federal Government generates, which as we know are enormous in number.

But there are documents throughout the country. Many of these records are from private citizens who made their contributions to our history. These records were rotting, lost, soon to be gone. Historians and archivists and others have been extremely concerned about this. The Congress acted some years ago to create the NHPRC to provide grants to try to preserve some of these raw materials of history. Indeed that is what this Commission tries to do, albeit with very small sums of money. Regrettably, as the Appropriations Committee and others struggle over dollars, they are not likely to hear an outpouring from the country about this need.

Yet as you will see at the close of my testimony there is a list of all the organizations that support your efforts to reauthorize this Commission and it includes the highly professional people who do the tedious and difficult work of sorting through documents, and the very skilled analytical and writing talents of our Historians. But also it includes a lot of average citizens who are filling our document rooms throughout the country in search of their own roots.

I happen to have become very much familiar with this in the last year as my own spouse has done this and is regularly telling me about what exists down at the Archives where you can actually lay your hands on the document of a Revolutionary War soldier.

But these individuals all across the country—and there are millions of them into genealogy—are searching through all kinds of things that are rotting away. This Commission is designed to try to prevent this loss. It is the same reason that we have the veter-

ans' organizations tune into this, because many of their members try to establish—sometimes they have to for the ability to get a pension—establish historical evidence.

That is one of the reasons the records of the Revolutionary War pension files are such a jewel because you actually can go back and read the letters of people describing what had happened so they can prove somebody is eligible for a pension.

I won't take you through all of this. Senator Sarbanes represents the Senate and I represent the House and Justice Blackmun represents the Court on the Commission. We don't actually participate in the recommendations on the specific grants. It is a very time-consuming task and fortunately we have a very capable staff through the Archives that does the initial work with the Commissioners making final recommendations to the Archivist. But also I think frankly it is rather inappropriate for us on the political side of the system to be specifically involved in grant decisions.

But all three of us will tell you, as I am today, that we have dedicated Commissioners. We certainly have very dedicated staff at the Archives, who do this work and there are lots of folks who derive benefits from it. So I hope its importance among all the other things that you and I are bombarded with will not be lost.

Thank you very much.

Mr. CONDIT. Thank you Mr. Sharp. We want to thank you for the work that you do and we appreciate it very much. Thank you. I know you have other things to do.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sharp follows:]

Testimony of Honorable Philip R. Sharp
before the Committee on Government Operations
Subcommittee on Information, Justice,
Transportation, and Agriculture.

June 23, 1993

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak on behalf of the reauthorization of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). As you know, this commission includes by law a member from the House and one from the Senate as well as a member of the Supreme Court. In is in the capacity as the Speaker's appointee to the commission that I come before you today.

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission is a small agency within the National Archives. But its small size is no indication of the large work it does in preserving and making available the historical memory of this nation through a series of grants in support of documentary publications and preservation programs in all fifty states.

The work of the NHPRC goes a long way toward guaranteeing that the fundamental documents of our nation's history, at the federal, state, and local levels are preserved for future generations, as well as for use today by scholars, government officials, school teachers, and the general public. The NHPRC supports such projects as the papers of the Founders of this country, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and others. The list also includes Jane Addams, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thomas Edison, and Booker T. Washington. In the area of documentary preservation, grants from the NHPRC support projects and programs to save from ravages of time a wide range of valuable records that are vital to understanding the history and development of each state and region in the nation.

The NHPRC goes about its mission with efficiency and relatively little fanfare. Naturally it has the support of a broad spectrum of associations representing professional historians and archivists, such as the American Historical Association and the Society of American Archivists, those most directly concerned with the preservation and use of historical records. But the support for the work of this agency comes from many other groups as well, such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the National Association of Counties, the American Family Records Association, the Association of American University Presses, and the Federation of Genealogical Societies.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to include in the record a list of some of the organizations which have submitted letters or resolutions of support for the reauthorization of the NHPRC. Many of these organizations stress the urgency of the mission of the NHPRC in light of existing challenges and new ones on the horizon. Funds in support of documentary preservation, and the publication of important historical records at all levels of government have not kept pace with the demand to maintain valuable information that is slipping away from us for want of proper preservation. Furthermore, many of the records of the present and the future will be created, used, and preserved in electronic format. We have no national standards for the preservation of electronic data, and no easy solutions to the many problems attendant to the long range preservation and use of electronic records. The NHPRC has spearheaded the search for solutions in these important areas.

I want to thank you and the members of the subcommittee for your support for the reauthorization of the NHPRC. This is the first important step toward insuring that the nation's memory is kept in tact for all of us.

Organizations and Groups Which have Submitted Resolutions in Support of Reauthorization of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission

American Association for State and Local History

American Family Records Association

American Historical Association

American Association of University Presses

Association for Documentary Editing

Association of Records Managers and Administrators, International

Federation of Genealogical Societies

Ladies Hermitage Association

Midwest Archives Conference

National Association of Counties

National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators

National Association of Secretaries of State

National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History

New York Association of Local Government Records Officers

Organization of American Historians

Society of American Archivists

Society for Textual Scholarship

Southern Historical Association

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Western History Association

Mr. CONDIT. Mrs. Thurman, do you have any opening statement or any comment you would like to make?

If not, the witnesses Dr. Peterson and Mr. Gerald George, if you will come forward. We have a practice of swearing witnesses in, so if you don't object.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. CONDIT. Dr. Peterson, why don't you begin and then we will go to Mr. George.

STATEMENT OF TRUDY HUSKAMP PETERSON, ACTING ARCHIVIST OF THE UNITED STATES, NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION AND ACTING CHAIRPERSON, NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDS COMMISSION

Dr. PETERSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will submit the statement for the record, so I will just make a few brief remarks.

We very much appreciate the opportunity to be here today. I am Trudy Peterson, the Acting Archivist of the United States and Acting Chairperson of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The National Archives and Records Administration is the guardian of the Nation's memory.

We have three very important things we do. We preserve the records of all three branches of government. We preserve records in all physical types ranging from 19th century paper to computer tapes created yesterday. We preserve these records not only here in Washington, but in our facilities across the Nation; from Anchorage to Atlanta, and from Los Angeles to Boston.

In addition to preserving materials, we also try to establish policy and procedures for records and information management in the government. We also publish the laws, the regulations, Presidential documents, and so forth.

We are very grateful to you, Mr. Chairman, to Representative Thomas, Chairman Conyers, and Congressman Sharp for cosponsoring the reauthorization of the NHPRC. We are very encouraged by the bipartisan support we have received.

Jerry George will provide details on the Commission itself, but I want to make one central point. NHPRC is a creator of national, State, and local partnerships, and it is a prime example, we believe, of the multiplier effect of Federal money.

Let me say three brief things. First of all, NHPRC is the National Archives' partnership with States and localities to ensure the full documentary preservation of history. For example, in the National Archives, you would find the records of the Department of Agriculture which have a lot of information about agriculture in, say, California. But on the other hand, if you wanted to see the impact on a place like the San Joaquin Valley, then you would want to see something like the collection of photographs in the Milliken collection.

In the Modesto Bee, which we just got faxed in, the headline reads, "Cataloging Milliken memorabilia proves big, but pleasant, task." This is funded by NHPRC money going there to help provide the support to do the preservation on the Milliken collection which, when matched up with the Department of Agriculture records, will

help show what agriculture in the San Joaquin Valley really looks like.

Second, there is also a partnership in the archival field to solve common problems. Many States and localities have the same problems the Federal Government has. We all have to preserve court records, for example. We have to deal with the new electronic records technology. So our branches through collaboration are able to set standards and create tools to manage major professional issues.

We support training. We support the kind of multipliers that training gives us throughout the country.

The third point is that the NHPRC grants work in partnership with other funds. More than half of every project that gets a grant from NHPRC comes from non-Federal dollars. The joint funding has enabled us to help support projects like the project in Virginia to preserve court records. More than half of that is funded out of Virginia funds.

Mr. Chairman, these three kinds of partnerships make the reauthorization of the NHPRC essential for continued national documentary progress. I hope this has been useful to you.

Again I thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your recognition of the value that NHPRC has to us all.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Peterson follows:]

TESTIMONY ON THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE NHPRC

By Dr. Trudy Huskamp Peterson
Acting Archivist of the United States
and Acting Chairperson of
The National Historical Publications and Records Commission

Presented to the
Information, Justice, Transportation and Agriculture Subcommittee
of the Committee on Government Operations
House of Representatives
Congress of the United States
June 23, 1993

Mr. Chairman, I am Trudy Huskamp Peterson, acting Archivist of the United States, a position that by statute makes me also acting Chairperson of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). As Archivist of the United States, I lead the institution that serves as the guardian of our Nation's memory. The records in our custody document the origins and evolution of all three branches of the United States Government and the history of the American people. As an archival institution, we identify, preserve, and make available the documentary materials of our Nation. In our role as a central management agency, the National Archives and Records Administration establishes regulatory policies and procedures for records and information management and publishes the laws, Presidential documents, regulations, and other official notices. Our constituents include the Federal Government, a history-minded public, the archival community and a broad array of professional associations and individuals in the fields of history, political science, law, library and information services, and genealogy. I am grateful for your invitation to testify today and for your sponsorship of legislation to reauthorize the Commission. I am grateful as well to your cosponsors for HR-2139 — Representative Thomas, of this subcommittee; Chairman Conyers of the House Committee on Government Operations, and Congressman Sharp, who

represents the House of Representatives on the Commission. All of us who place high value on the work of NHPRC are encouraged by this bipartisan support from senior members of the Congress.

You are well aware that the NHPRC makes grants all over this country for the preservation and publication of records that document American history. Without these records, there can be no accurate writing of history, no accurate teaching of it, and no public understanding of it. The Commission's executive director, Gerald George, will provide details on how the Commission is structured, how it operates, and what it achieves. I would like to make just three brief points about why the Commission is so valuable to the citizens of the United States. Central to all three is this fact: the NHPRC is not just a Federal Government program; the NHPRC is a creator of national, state, and local partnerships.

Point one is that the NHPRC works in partnership with the National Archives to preserve America's documentary heritage as a whole. Point two is that the NHPRC works in partnership with the archival field to solve problems that it would be difficult and wasteful for state and local archival institutions to try to solve individually. Point three is that the NHPRC works in partnership with other funders to support projects; its grants have a multiplier effect by encouraging contributions from state, local, and private donors.

First, the partnership with the National Archives:

The National Archives has a responsibility to preserve all

permanently valuable Federal records and to make them accessible to the American people. But Federal records alone do not by any means adequately document the history of this country. That requires preserving a range of state, local, and private records as well. Grants from the NHPRC are an essential source of help to preserve those non-Federal records.

For example, National Archives holdings from the U.S. Department of Agriculture shed light on agricultural policies that have critically affected the farms and vineyards of California's San Joaquin Valley. But understanding the history of people who settled in the Valley depends also on a private collection of historical materials in California – the Ralph L. Milliken Collection of 5,000 historical photographs plus historical documents, newspaper clippings, and oral interviews with long-time residents. An NHPRC grant helped California State College, Stanislaus, in Turlock, California, evaluate and process those materials for the use of researchers, students, and interested citizens today and in the future.

Similarly, the National Archives holds official records of 19th century military expeditions into Wyoming, of Plains Indian wars, of forts and trails and treaties. But researchers who use those records also use the holdings of the Wyoming State Museum, where an NHPRC grant helped preserve a collection of nitrate and glass-plate negatives picturing mining, agriculture, ranching, and Native American life. The NHPRC is an essential partner with the National Archives in preserving the combination of Federal

and non-Federal records essential for understanding American history. Second, NHPRC's partnership with the archival field:

As a professional archivist, I know that certain archival problems challenge archivists at every level – those at the National Archives, at the California State Archives, and at the American Heritage Center in Wyoming. What standards should we follow in appraising and acquiring records? What techniques will most effectively enable us to preserve and store them? What methods should we use in arranging and describing them? What are the best ways to make them accessible to the public? How do we deal with the special problems of preserving photographs, films, videotapes, maps, architectural drawings, and, particularly in our time, electronic records – records not written or printed on paper but generated by computers on disk and tape?

It would be sheer folly for every archival institution in the country to seek its own answers to those questions, its own solutions to those problems. Worse, it would be a huge, duplicative waste of resources that archives, particularly at state and local levels, simply cannot afford. But with relatively little money, archivists can collaborate to set standards, create tools, publish guides, and solve problems. With grants totalling less than $700,000 to two major, national archival organizations – the Society of American Archivists (SAA), and the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA) – the NHPRC has helped train, equip, and guide the entire field, in partnership with it.

Third, NHPRC's partnership with other funders:

NHPRC finances almost nothing alone. On the average, more than half of the cost of every project that gets NHPRC grant assistance is paid for by non-Federal dollars from other donors. And that is not accidental. The NHPRC believes that its Federal funds should be used catalytically to encourage other funders of important documentary projects. The help to local governments I just described includes a how-to book on records management that exists because the NHPRC staff worked out an agreement with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to provide joint funding. NHPRC training programs for archival managers and documentary editors are jointly funded with private foundations. Ten legislatures have appropriated matching funds for NHPRC grants for state records activities. Such joint funding was the start of Kentucky's local records grant program, for Virginia's program to improve the preservation of court records, and for Hawaii's project to survey records documenting its ethnic heritage. The grants I mentioned in California and Wyoming at the outset were in partnership with other funders. California State College, Stanislaus, itself contributed more than a third of the costs of processing the Milliken Collection, partly by absorbing the project's overhead cost — something that NHPRC as a matter of policy expects its grantees to do. You will never be embarrassed by negative publicity about huge indirect-cost payments to grantees of NHPRC. Most indirect costs are contributed as part of joint funding.

Mr. Chairman, those are three kinds of partnerships that make the reauthorization of the NHPRC essential for continued national documentary progress. I hope this has been useful to you. Again I thank you for the opportunity to testify, and for your recognition of the value that the NHPRC has to us all.

[end]

The Modesto Bee metro

Cataloging Milliken memorabilia proves big, but pleasant, task

By WARREN WILLIAMS
Bee senior writer

LOS BANOS — Sandralea Watson is spending a few pleasant months with Ralph Milliken and the people he knew, some of them dating back to the earliest white settlers in the Los Banos area.

Milliken, who became a rural Los Banos mail carrier after graduating in 1909 from Stanford University, died in 1970 at age 90, leaving behind a wealth of historical material. But he was a collector and writer, not an archivist.

So the vast collection he left to the museum he started has been largely useless to serious students of Los Banos area history. Objects he collected are on display at the Los Banos museum, but the written material has been stored under display cases and elsewhere, awaiting funds to hire expert help in preserving the material, cataloging it and indexing it.

This is Watson's job — bringing order to the boxes, cartons and folders, the Milliken writings, including novels, manuscripts, interviews, letters and newspaper stories. He laboriously gathered other materials about people and history, some of it re-typed from old newspapers simply to be sure it was preserved.

This treasure of local history — or at least part of it — finally is being put into proper order under a grant obtained through the leadership of California State College, Stanislaus. Watson, previously a state archivist with college teaching experience, was hired to tackle the project.

As a rural mail carrier, she notes, Milliken had daily contact with many of the pioneer west side families, typically making contact on the route and then going back for in-depth interviewing. Eying a long list of names, Watson says: "These are local people, early-settler descendants, sometimes the actual settlers. Usually they were very young when their family came here.

"By going out when he did, he was able to talk to people who had been among the first settlers, who had come out in covered wagons and could vividly recall these experiences.

"The man was incredibly prolific. Most of these interviews were conducted in the 1920s through the 1940s, although he did continue to interview people into the 1960s when he was in his 80s."

Milliken started early. Found in an autograph book in letter form is this message obtained in 1890 in Alpena, SD: "Perfect equality of rights for women — civil and political — is the demand of.... Yours sincerely, Susan B. Anthony."

His collection shows an abiding interest in people, whatever their station, and their stories. This proved an enduring trial to his patient wife, as when he became acquainted with two aged adventurers down on their luck.

He took them home as guests and thus the collection includes a 650-page account of the experiences of John Young in Alaska during the gold rush days before the turn of the century and another on the adventures of Peter Oleson in Argentina and Brazil.

Milliken did a 100-page book on a Virginia woman's covered-wagon crossing which eventually was published in condensed form by a Virginia historical society.

Another published work, "The California Don," dealt with the family of a Spanish don descendant who aided Milliken as an interpreter in 30 years of research for an unfinished history on the mission at San Juan Bautista. This work includes a 4,000-card index and eight volumes of notes with recollections going back to the 1830s plus a manuscript on a mission native who lived to be 106.

"He had a very hard time findiog publishers," says Watson. However, other books were published, including two autobiographical efforts, "Dakota Boy" and "Adventures Of A Lifetime."

Milliken wrote a book on his adventures when at ago 70 he took an Italian freighter to Europe.

There he avoided the typical tourist haunts, seeing the sights with people he met along the way, often students, spending several days with a family he met in England and thereafter including his exchanges with them in his collection.

Watson points out, "He collected anything that had to do with the county fair. Anytime there were dinners or dances posted at the post office, he got the posters." This urge to collect extended to military recruitment posters for the Navy, Army, Marines, Nurses' corps and other service organizations and a prized set of these from both world wars is on display at the museum.

Milliken's focus upon early Los Banos history and people gives a rich glimpse of a contrasting countryside. On one hand it blossomed with wildflowers in the spring and boasted an abundance of ducks, tule elk and other wildlife; on the other it possessed a loneliness that drove a rural housewife insane.

And when he was not collecting and writing original material, he was busy going through the files of Merced County and local newspapers, copying by typewriter to preserve a wide variety of events that occurred between 1875 and 1902. These included social events, births, deaths, crime, land sales, whatever he considered of local interest or significance.

"Now," says Watson, "if these papers are gone (the original newspapers), this is going to be very valuable."

Future researchers will find a wealth of material collected for a book about Henry Miller, German

See Page A-4, MILLIKEN

Milliken memorabilia

Continued

immigrant counted as the founder of Los Banos. It was here that Miller established the original headquarters for his vast land and cattle empire.

When Milliken interviewed anyone, says Watson, he always asked for incidents involving Miller. Also, he gathered much material about the May Day celebration, an annual picnic Miller hosted that grew into the Los Banos May Day Fair.

In the 1950s Milliken launched a campaign to found a museum in Miller's honor and began collecting historical materials and an estimated 5,000 photos from early-day families to go into it.

When the museum was dedicated two years before his death, the community named it the Ralph Milliken Museum.

A building and curator, however, were not enough. His wealth of material had to be put in proper order and preserved, and this finally is being done by Watson through the interest and leadership of a group of Turlock-area residents including Dr. John Caswell, history professor at California State College, Turlock.

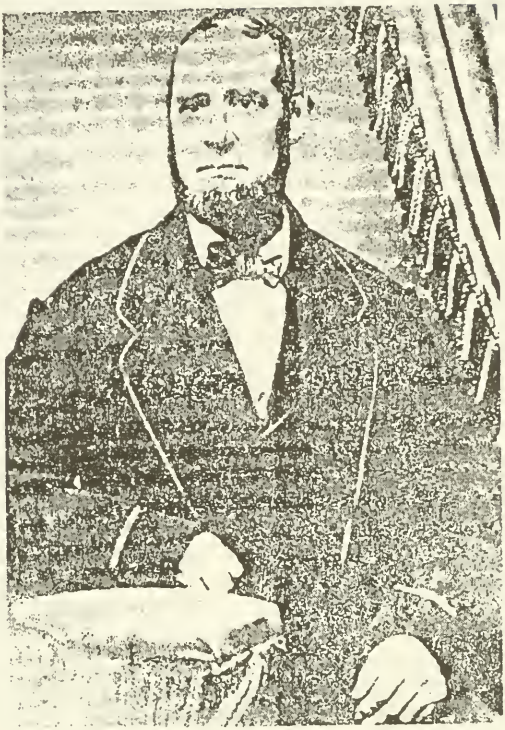
The Turlock Centennial Commission donated $585 in surplus funds for an initial survey of the collection by Lynn Bonfield Donovan, an archial specialist, who described the museum as "one of the finest small repositories in California" thanks to Milliken material.

This report persuaded the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to initially donate $1,000 for an additional survey, undertaken by Caswell, museum curator Robert Kuhn, a compatriot of Milliken in establishing the museum, and his wife Roby, who heads the recently incorporated Milliken Museum Society.

Dr. Caswell says a condition of the grant was that ownership be clarified and this was done by Merced County taking full title; the museum was on county land — the park on Highway 152 west of downtown Los Banos.

This new survey provided the basis for another application, with the commission approving $5,341 to finance 25 per cent of the proposed project, and this is financing work on the most valuable portion.

This, says Watson, was to pay for six cubic feet of Milliken's papers, but while turning out to be about 15 with an estimated 600 cubic feet of material.



Henry Miller, Los Banos founder who built a land and cattle empire.

the first block of material — diaries, correspondence and manuscripts — largely processed, she now is turning to the next parts of the collection, which she estimates at 200 cubic feet of publications, diplomas, photographs, clippings, research notes, autograph books and posters.

In all, the collection comprises an

Watson estimates her work under the present grant will be finished by mid-November.

At present, museum hours are limited — 12 to 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. And while Milliken might object, visitors will find the Milliken family display accorded a prominence of equal interest to Henry Miller, the man he set out to memorialize.

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. George.

STATEMENT OF GERALD GEORGE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDS COMMISSION

Mr. GEORGE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I join Congressman Sharp and Dr. Peterson in thanking you very much for your support of reauthorization legislation for the Commission. I am delighted that it is bipartisan support as well. I am grateful to Mr. Thomas on the subcommittee and Mr. Conyers who also is a cosponsor with you as well as Mr. Sharp himself.

I have prepared fairly lengthy written testimony that covers what NHPRC has been doing and the progress that we have been making. I would like to submit that for the record and restrict myself this morning just to a very quick talk about something that I think cuts to the heart of the matter in terms of NHPRC.

Mr. Chairman, to take a page from Mr. Perot and more latterly the President, this isn't exactly a chart, but it is a graphic effort to put in one picture what it is we do. I don't know whether you can see that from there or not.

Mr. CONDIT. Can you hand that to us?

Mr. GEORGE. What it shows in the top photograph, it shows what NHPRC does. In effect, what it shows in the top photograph is a picture of the kind of conditions in which valuable historical records at the local and State levels exist all over this country. What our grants do all over this country is to transform that upper picture into the other two.

The middle one is a picture of a well-ordered archival collection where people can easily get to valuable documents that they need for a variety of purposes. The other picture shows the books, one of the books—some of the books that we help to, the editing and publishing of which we help to finance.

What our grants are doing is taking inaccessible material that is in jeopardy of being lost forever, making it available through a variety of archival institutions and taking the most important of those papers and publishing them so they are available every place throughout the country.

I would like to explain what we do, what we have been doing in terms of who cares. Congressman Sharp gave you for the record a list I think of some 18 national and regional organizations that have passed formal resolutions at their most recent conventions in support of reauthorization of the Commission.

I would like to submit for the record if I may the resolutions themselves that those organizations have passed if that is agreeable.

Mr. CONDIT. Absolutely.

[The information may be found in the subcommittee files.]

Mr. GEORGE. Among those organizations, I would like to take just two or three of them and explain why they care about an organization as small as ours that is involved in the preservation of history.

One of those organizations is the VFW, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the reason that the VFW is supporting this reauthoriza-

tion is because we contribute to the publication of volumes such as this.

Roger, you might show Mrs. Thurman and Mr. Condit some of the other volumes in this series. We are funding volumes in a documents for democracy program that will result in the publication of material that will document the founding of this country, its basic political institutions, and the thinking of its founders. These volumes contain the papers of Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Madison, Franklin, the ratification of the Constitution, the beginnings of the Supreme Court, and the first Federal Congress, which as you know passed the Bill of Rights.

Another organization that has passed a resolution in support of us is the National Association of State Secretaries of State. That is because many of them are in charge of State archives and all of them know the value of the kinds of records that are preserved in State archives. The secretaries of state, along with other State government officials who are supporting our reauthorization, do so because we work in partnership with the States.

Every State now has a State historical records advisory board that evaluates grant applications for us and furnishes recommendations to us about policies. And in every State we have helped—a grant from us has helped to support a statewide historic records survey in every State except one—and our grants have also enabled the State coordinators nationally to produce the first report in 30 years that surveys in detail the condition, the problems, and the progress of State archives in the United States.

I would like to submit that for the record also.

Mr. CONDIT. Certainly.

[The information may be found in the subcommittee files.]

Mr. GEORGE. The Association of Records Managers and Administrators, something like 29 of their chapters in the United States have approved resolutions in support of this reauthorization, as well as the national organization, and they do so because we have provided very important support for local government records management.

Some of you on the subcommittee have been administrators in county and city governments. Records management is something that saves local governments money on the one hand by reducing storage costs, but also makes it more effective in terms of serving taxpaying citizens by making material readily available for their use.

We have supported a lot of records management programs all over this country. And that is one of the reasons that ARMA has been very supportive of our reauthorization. The American Historical Association, of course, and a number of other national and regional historical associations, support this for the obvious reason that historians cannot do research without the kind of material that we are saving and publishing, and they cannot write the textbooks that are used in schools and they cannot teach children accurately at any level without this kind of basic research.

But in addition, the Federation of Genealogical Societies has passed a resolution—so has the American Family Records Association—because a lot of the material that we help to save, help to

make available, is material that people use to trace the histories of their families all across this country.

I have here, thinking of the uses of material that we save through NHPRC grants, I have here one document that I would like to share with you that came—was turned up by a documentary editing project that we fund, the Lincoln legal papers. We have a lot of material on Lincoln, but we do not have a lot from the time when he was an active practitioner of law in the State of Illinois, and this project has gone out, has searched courthouses for materials all over the State of Illinois and has come up with some things that have amazed historians and may lead to some changes in interpretation of Lincoln.

One of these, in fact, I have a copy of here. Roger, you might just show that to the chairman and his colleagues. It is a page from a 43-page document that turned up in a courthouse in Illinois that is believed now to be the longest single manuscript in Abraham Lincoln's hand.

So we are not only saving material, making it available for use, but in some cases turning up things that we didn't know about before that eventually will be used by historians to rewrite the textbooks of the country.

Finally, this material is used by other people than the ones I have mentioned. Lawyers look to historical documents for precedence and for the context of decisions; so do jurists. Business people use this material for a variety of purposes. People doing film and TV documentaries use it. Ken Burns in the Civil War documentary—Barbara Fields was one of his spokesperson on that program. She was here recently for an event that we had concerning black history. And even Members of Congress I understand use this material. The editors of the Supreme Court project tell me they get calls from staff members and Members of the Congress here with some regularity about the background of legal issues.

Mr. Chairman, this is the kind of thing we do, and this is why it is appreciated by such a range of people. If this—if we can be reauthorized, we can continue to build on this kind of work and this kind of progress, and we can do so in very specific ways.

I would like to submit for the record, if I may, a copy of both a summary and the detailed version of the NHPRC's strategic plan. We are told by staff on Capitol Hill in various offices that I have visited that we are one of the few agencies of the Federal Government that has a detailed plan with specific objectives for progress in the future.

This plan has 5 broad goals, and 17 specific objectives ranked in four levels of priority, and if we are reauthorized, this will guide our activities and set forth our goals for the future.

To conclude, if we are unable to do this through reauthorization, some of the things that we propose to achieve in this plan, some of the things are these. One, we will be able to help every State in the country devise a strategic plan itself for using its squeezed, restricted resources in the most effective and economical way to make documentary progress within the States and set priorities there.

A second accomplishment we will be able to make is that we will fund a research agenda on electronic records, records generated by

computers, records of a kind that are mushrooming at every level of government and in private institutions, but with which archivists are struggling to be able to preserve and to make accessible.

We will be able to fund a research agenda that will provide help in solving those problems with electronic records for the benefit of archivists all over the country at every level.

We will also be able to complete or get close to completing 44 documentary editing projects of the kind I have described. There are a number of volumes on the table over here if you would like to inspect them, and that is another major accomplishment that we will be able to make.

Finally, we will be able to come up with ways to trace documentary progress in this country and to be able to report to this subcommittee and to the American people in the future very specifically on what kind of progress we are or are not making in saving the American record.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my remarks. I would be glad to take questions.

Mr. CONDIT. Thank you very much.

The documents that you asked to be included in the record, without objection, will be included.

[The prepared statement of Mr. George follows:]

TESTIMONY ON THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE NHPRC

By Gerald George
Executive Director
National Historical Publications and Records Commission

Presented to the
Information, Justice, Transportation and Agriculture Subcommittee
of the Committee on Government Operations
House of Representatives
Congress of the United States
June 23, 1993

Mr. Chairman, I am Gerald George, executive director of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. I thank you and your colleagues on the Subcommittee for the invitation to testify today on behalf of the NHPRC. All of us join with Dr. Peterson in expressing gratitude for your sponsorship of legislation to reauthorize the Commission. We are grateful as well to Representatives Thomas, Conyers, and Sharp for their co-sponsorship.

In this testimony I will offer a brief description of the Commission, its history, its structure, its achievements, and its specific plans for promoting documentary progress in the future. I will quickly attempt to explain as well how the NHPRC meets criteria of the Clinton Administration for effective government service, and why the NHPRC is valued by such a range of national organizations as the eighteen that have passed formal resolutions urging the Commission's reauthorization, organizations as different as the National Association of Counties and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The Congress created the Commission in 1934, simultaneously with creation of the National Archives. While mandating the Archives to preserve permanently valuable Federal records, the Congress charged the Commission with identifying particularly important records for publication — the papers of exceptionally

influential individuals, such as Thomas Jefferson, for example, and papers documenting exceptionally important events in American history, such as the ratification of the Constitution. Subsequently the Congress authorized the Commission to receive appropriations with which to make grants for such publications, and also to make grants to states, localities, and non-profit institutions to help preserve non-Federal records of historical significance.

The Congress authorized the Archivist of the United States to make such grants, on the advice of a fifteen-member Commission of distinguished Federal officials and representatives of a range of professional fields. By law the Commission now consists of two representatives of the Congress (currently Senator Sarbanes for the Senate and Representative Sharp for the House), two representatives of the President, a Supreme Court justice, one representative each from the Library of Congress and the Departments of State and Defense, and one representative from each of six national, professional associations of historians, archivists, and documentary editors. The Archivist of the United States chairs the Commission, which meets three times a year to review documentary progress and evaluate grant applications.

To date NHPRC grants have helped to bring to completion 227 projects to publish historical papers and documents in single- or multi-volume book editions and/or in microform. Because of such work, scholars, teachers, students, and interested citizens now have ready access to completed editions of the writings of such

major figures in American history as Alexander Hamilton, Henry Clay, Booker T. Washington, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

The Commission currently is helping to complete editing and publication of forty-five additional documentary editions. Nine of these comprise the NHPRC's Documents for Democracy program; collectively they will document for all time the creation of this nation's basic governmental institutions and the thinking of its founders. Grant recipients in this program are editing and publishing the papers of Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, James Madison, Benjamin Franklin, and George Washington. Also they are editing and publishing papers that document the ratification of the Constitution, the beginnings of the Supreme Court, the development of U.S. foreign policy operations, and the work of the First Federal Congress, including its passage of the Bill of Rights. In addition to making these historical materials accessible in American libraries and schools, we are currently approaching the United States Information Agency about the possibility of distributing these editions abroad, particularly in countries that are attempting to democratize.

The remaining thirty-six records-publication projects that we are trying to help editors complete document a wide range of historically prominent individuals, developments, and events. Included are the papers of Presidents, from Andrew Jackson to Dwight David Eisenhower; of social reformers and labor leaders such as Jane Addams and Samuel Gompers; of the Spanish colonial

administrator Diego de Vargas, the celebrated jurist John Marshall, and the famed inventor and businessman, Thomas Edison. Within the past year we have celebrated both the completion of an edition of the writings of Black Abolitionists in America and the beginning of publication of an edition of the papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. Projects we currently assist also are documenting the emancipation of the slaves, and the relations of Native Americans and Spanish colonists on the Southwestern American frontier.

Taken together, the current projects assisted by NHPRC grants and those already completed have produced more than 700 volumes of published historical material and more than 9,000 reels of microfilm. A major part of this work has been locating historical papers, many of which otherwise would be unknown to individual researchers or prohibitively difficult to track down. Editors have turned up 36 letters to James Madison from a revolutionary Virginia jurist, Edmund Pendleton, with whom the "Father of the Constitution" extensively consulted. Another case in point is a project NHPRC helps support to publish the legal papers of Abraham Lincoln. A search for documents that shed light on Lincoln's thought and work as a practicing attorney has led editors to courthouses all across Illinois. Recently they discovered, stashed away in one of them, the longest document — 43 pages — yet known in Lincoln's own handwriting.

This is a record of success that Americans need the NHPRC to continue. This is a kind of work that pays off in education for

citizenship. These are projects that help us understand American history better, write it more fully and accurately, and teach it more effectively. This is an investment in history education, not only now but for generations to come.

But the Commission's achievements do not end with publication of major documents. We do much more. The NHPRC has made grants in every state and U.S. territorial jurisdiction for saving valuable historical records, developing programs for their care, and providing access to them. NHPRC grants have helped archivists preserve, arrange and describe records, including maps and photographs, on almost every conceivable historical subject. NHPRC grants have helped local governments and nonprofit organizations create archival programs so that users can get at records that otherwise sit in spare rooms, warehouses, or receptacles destined for destruction. NHPRC grants have helped, or are helping, every state survey historical records and their conditions statewide. And NHPRC grants have helped and are helping archivists gain training, develop techniques, and overcome obstacles to preserving and providing access to valuable records.

To take but one example, while a court in the recent PROFS case, about which you have been reading in the newspapers, deliberated over concerns about the disposition of White House electronic records, the NHPRC made a grant to the University of Pittsburgh to do research that will help archivists deal with the technical problems of preserving and providing access to all of

the new kinds of electronic records that future historians and others will need. Learning to deal with electronic records is something in which members of the House Government Operations Committee have more than a passing interest. The Committee's report entitled Taking a Byte Out of History encourages the kind of work in this area that NHPRC is using grants to advance.

Among our greatest successes is our collaboration with state archival authorities to produce progress. NHPRC grant applications are reviewed by a network of state historical records advisory boards in every state. State historical records coordinators, who chair those boards, have just produced a report that I request your permission to enter in the record. It describes the results of the most extensive survey of state archives since Ernst Posner's pioneering study 30 years ago. In 1963, twelve states had no state archivist; nine had no program at all for managing permanently valuable records; and fourteen had no coordinated program for the management of local government records. In 1993, every state government has a functioning archival program; all but one also has a functioning state-government records-management program; and just one lacks a formal local-government records program. The report shows progress also in state legislation pertaining to records, in training of state archivists, and in dealing with state records created with new technologies. The report specifically credits NHPRC grants for significantly contributing to many of these advances, and cites instances in which NHPRC grants were

instrumental.

These are investments not only in history but in the information infrastructure of the United States. The holdings of archives are of value to all kinds of people for all kinds of uses: genealogists tracing their families; legislators seeking the original contexts of laws; journalists looking for background material for stories; TV and film producers working on documentaries; developers and other business people researching property titles and real estate boundaries; environmentalists trying to identify where contaminants came from; museum curators and historic preservationists studying old artifacts and buildings; and lawyers and jurists identifying precedents and evaluating the basis of previous court opinions. The editor of a project we help support to publish papers documenting the first years of the Supreme Court reports that they get calls frequently from lawyers, judges, and even Members of Congress and their staffs in quest of information about legal issues and their history.

That is why reauthorization of the NHPRC is so widely supported. Eighteen national and regional organizations have passed formal resolutions urging the Congress to reauthorize the Commission. They include organizations whose concerns for the NHPRC's work is obvious: the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, the Southern and Western Historical Associations, and the Society of American Archivists. But they also include organizations of government officials, such

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as the National Association of State Secretaries of State, the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, and the National Association of Counties. The state and local officials who belong to these organizations recognize the value of NHPRC grants for helping create records management programs that reduce costs of records storage and retrieval and make it easier for clerks to locate quickly records that tax-paying citizens request. Government officials include members of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators, twenty-nine of whose local chapters joined the national organization in passing resolutions in support of NHPRC's reauthorization. NHPRC's reauthorization also is urged in resolutions from the American Family Records Association and the Federation of Genealogical Societies, because their members depend on records preservation and access to study family history. Such records also are vital to the work of community historians, historical societies, and local museums that belong to the American Association for State and Local History. Organizations that have formally voted to urge reauthorization additionally include the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), because the VFW wants the Commission to be able to continue funding our Documents for Democracy Program, to continue helping to publish the writings of such military leaders as Generals U.S. Grant and George C. Marshall, and to continue providing materials of significance for teaching American history.

All of this work NHPRC is carrying out with an eye to operating as a model of how President Clinton says that Federal agencies should operate. I refer to specific points in the comprehensive economic plan that he published as A Vision of Change for America. Following those points, the NHPRC puts funds into the work of people in the field, not into a Washington bureaucracy. The NHPRC is currently implementing recommendations for a special study of how it can be more user-friendly and efficient in its operations, as the President urges. The NHPRC already severely restricts indirect-cost allowances in its grants, as the President recommends. The NHPRC leverages its funds through private-public partnerships in supporting projcts, as the President prefers. And most important of all, even before the election of the President, the NHPRC adopted a strategic plan for future achievements, with specific measurable objectives ranked by priority. Legislation is pending to require this of all Federal programs. But we are told by staff on Capitol Hill that NHPRC is one of the few government agencies to have such a plan, a specific blueprint that shows where we propose to go, how we propose to get there, and with what benefits for the public.

I would like to offer a complete copy of that plan, as well as a summary of it, for this hearing's record. But permit me to close by describing the ultimate outcomes to which it is designed to take us. If the NHPRC is reauthorized, we will be able to provide the following to the extent that annual appropriations permit; each point below corresponds to a specific objective in

the plan:

- Solid information every year on whether or not progress is adequate in saving the records that document American history and making them accessible;
- Published documentation of the creation of our nation and the thinking of its founders;
- A plan in every state for making the best use of available resources to preserve and make available the most important state and local historical records;
- Research results that will help people concerned with records preservation at all levels to cope successfully with electronic records;
- Stronger private-public collaboration in support of documentary editing;
- Increased private financial support for the preservation and publication of the nation's documentary heritage;
- Published documentation on historical persons and developments representing the range of American history beyond the founding era;
- Less threatened, more accessible state and local historical records;
- Easier access for scholars and other researchers to the historical records they need;
- Better tools, techniques, training, and standards for documentary editing;

- More published documents for scholars to use in pursuing major lines of inquiry in American history and for teachers to use in enlivening history education;
- Better information on records needs across the states and what to do to meet them;
- Better service from archives and archivists through better planning, training, and institutional self-evaluation;
- Better public understanding of history through increased use of original source materials by teachers, students, scholars, and citizens at large.

The NHPRC was last reauthorized in 1988; its current authorization expires as of midnight on September 30, this year. We hope for the opportunity to build on our past success. We hope for the chance to produce the additional benefits that our plan envisions. We hope to be authorized to continue helping to assure Americans that their documentary heritage will be safe and accessible. Thank you very much.

[end]

In Every State NHPRC Grants

Turn This—

Into This—

And This—

The American Historical Record

Priorities for Preservation and Publication

Summary Of A Plan Adopted By
The National Historical Publications and Records Commission
20 February 1992

To the President and the Congress of the United States

This is a report on action needed to preserve and publish American historical records. Many records that document our history are deteriorating for want of adequate care. Others go unsurveyed and disappear. Some of the most important records are minimally accessible. The writings of many historically prominent Americans remain unpublished. Needs are urgent, both to preserve our documentary heritage and to enable scholars, students, and citizens to use it. After wide consultation with the field, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) has devised a plan to meet the needs. The plan is summarized in this report.

The Commission's report is submitted in response to Public Law 100-365, which requires that the NHPRC "shall make plans, estimates, and recommendations for historical works and collections of sources it considers appropriate for preserving, publishing, or otherwise recording at the public expense," and that the Commission's chairman "shall transmit to the President and the Congress from time to time, and at least biennially, the plans, estimates, and recommendations developed and approved by the Commission."

In accordance with that law, I have the honor to transmit this report, containing plans, estimates, and recommendations adopted unanimously by the Commission on 20 February 1992. It is a plan with specific, affordable objectives, a plan that shows how small investments can make large differences in the ability of scholars and citizens to understand and appreciate our history. It is a plan for Federal, state, and local collaboration to assure the American people that the records of their historical experience will survive and be accessible.

Respectfully yours,

Don W. Wilson
Chairman, NHPRC
Archivist of the United States

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission

Mission

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission--a statutory body affiliated with the National Archives and Records Administration--is dedicated to the principle that the nation's historical documents are a priceless national legacy and vital to an understanding of our country's national history and culture. The Commission exists to offer advice, assistance, and encouragement to all individuals and institutions committed to the preservation and use of documentary resources reflecting our nation's history. All of the Commission's work reflects the statutory intention to protect a national documentary treasure that, if lost, cannot be replaced. (Adopted June 1990)

Membership

Dr. Don W. Wilson, Archivist of the United States, Chairman

Justice Harry A. Blackmun
representing the U.S. Supreme Court

Senator Paul S. Sarbanes
representing the U.S. Senate

Representative Philip R. Sharp
representing the U.S. House of Representatives

Mr. Charles G. Palm
representing the President of the United States

Dr. Frank E. Vandiver
representing the President of the United States

Dr. William Z. Slany
representing the Department of State

Dr. Alfred Goldberg
representing the Department of Defense

Dr. James Hutson
representing the Librarian of Congress

Dr. Charles T. Cullen
representing the Association for Documentary Editing

Mr. John A. Fleckner
representing the Society of American Archivists

Mr. David H. Hoober
representing the American Association for State and Local History

Professor Robin D.G. Kelley
representing the Organization of American Historians

Dr. William S. Price, Jr.
representing the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators

Professor John Alexander Williams
representing the American Historical Association

What are historical records?

They are the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and records of the U.S. Government preserved in the National Archives. But the majority of the nation's historical records were not created by the government. The NHPRC is concerned with *non-Federal* records as well as Federal ones.

They include the papers of George Washington and James Madison being edited for publication at the University of Virginia; records of the emancipation of the slaves, being collected and edited at the University of Maryland; documents about Spanish settlement in the American Southwest, being translated and edited at the Arizona State Museum.

They include records about states, localities, and groups--records in the archives of the cities of Los Angeles, California, and Wilmington, Delaware; records in the Detroit and Milwaukee Public Libraries; records in the Ohio Historical Society and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission; records of the Portsmouth Athenaeum in New Hampshire, the Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation in Delaware, and the Ramah Navajo School Board in Pine Hill, New Mexico.

They include old photographs at West Virginia University and the Rochester, N.Y., Institute of Technology; newsfilm at the Oregon Historical Society, and lumber industry documents at the University of Mississippi.

All of these kinds of historical records, in all of these places, are being preserved or made more accessible with assistance from NHPRC grants.

Who Needs Historical Records?

Historians need them to determine the truth about what happened in history.

Just in the past year, editors of NHPRC-funded projects turned up documents indicating that women were far more influential in politics and business matters in the era of the American Revolution than had been thought; that Thomas Edison did not start out as an uneducated country boy nor Abraham Lincoln as an unsophisticated prairie lawyer; that many freed slaves were literate; and that scholars may need to revise their understanding of certain views attributed to James Madison and Ulysses S. Grant.

Teachers need original documents to give history life and reality in the classroom. **Students** need them to write graduate theses, college course papers, and high-school reports. NHPRC-assisted projects have published documents in forms expressly for educational use. At U.C.L.A., editors of *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers* have published material for schools. So have editors of *The Documentary History of the First Federal Congress*, the Congress that passed the Bill of Rights.

Legislators need historical records to understand the context of laws. **Lawyers** need them for background information in developing their cases. **Judges** need them to identify precedents and evaluate previous court opinions. The editors of the NHPRC-assisted *Documentary History of the Supreme Court* get calls about such things all the time—including calls from members of the Congress.

All kinds of other people need historical records, too:

genealogists tracing their families in history;

journalists seeking background for stories;

developers researching property titles and boundaries;

environmentalists trying to identify where contaminents came from;

film and TV producers working on documentaries;

historic preservationists and museum curators studying buildings and artifacts;

and **citizens with individual interests** in particular aspects of American history, from Civil War battles to the movement for Civil Rights, from John Paul Jones to the West Virginia labor leader "Mother" Jones, from Diego de Vargas to Lewis and Clark.

Work assisted by the NHPRC helps them all.

What Are the Threats to Historical Records?

In 1991 papers once belonging to Kingman Brewster, former president of Yale University and ambassador to Great Britain, were found in a dump. Included was a letter to Brewster from Charles A. Lindbergh.

In 1983 a report on records surveys in 27 states concluded that "state records agencies are in an impoverished condition," that "few local governments have adequate records programs," that the condition of their records "is worsening," that the majority of other records repositories "are barely capable of providing even the most rudimentary and basic maintenance of their holdings."

In 1990, the Committee on Government Operations of the U.S. House of Representatives called attention to the problems of preserving mushrooming quantities of electronic records, citing the case of the 1960 U.S. Census. Computer tapes used for census returns in the 1960s became obsolete in a few years. There are only two machines in the world that can read the original data tapes from that census. One machine is in the Smithsonian Institution and the other is in Japan.

In 1990, the editors of *The Papers of James Madison* discovered 37 letters to Madison in a private sale. The letters were from Edmund Pendleton, a Virginia jurist and revolutionary who exchanged political views with "the father of the U.S. Constitution." Pendleton's influence would be hard to assess had those letters not been found.

Eighteen years ago the NHPRC identified 465 historical persons and subjects whose papers should be edited and published. Funds have been available to complete only 38 such editions, and to begin 44 more, for a total of just 82, less than 18 per cent of the recommended list.

Thus the historical record is literally full of holes--the result of insect borings, rat chewings, sun-seared script, faded photographs, moldy notation, acidic "eating." It also suffers from shredded paper, erased tapes, irretrievable computer data, and acres of cubic feet of documents inaccessible for want of enough staff time and money to process them. And papers that should be made widely available through publication are not. Not even those that document the formation of our nation and the thinking of its founders--Jefferson, Franklin, Madison, Adams, Washington.

Lack of understanding, neglect, insufficient resources--that is what threatens the historical record. That is what the NHPRC faces.

What Is the NHPRC's Responsibility for Historical Records?

The Congress created the NHPRC in 1934 to keep track of what needs to be done. Public Law 100-365 gives the NHPRC that unique responsibility:

The Commission shall make plans, estimates, and recommendations for historical works and collections of sources it considers appropriate for preserving, publishing or otherwise recording at the public expense . . .

The Commission shall cooperate with, assist and encourage appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies and nongovernmental institutions, societies and individuals in collecting and preserving and, when it considers it desirable, in editing and publishing papers of outstanding citizens of the United States, and other documents as may be important for an understanding and appreciation of the history of the United States . . .

To enable the NHPRC to make those judgments knowledgeably, the Congress gave it fifteen members. Six of them represent national associations of historians, documentary editors, and archivists. Four members represent Federal agencies (the National Archives, the Library of Congress, and the Departments of State and Defense). The remaining five represent the President, the Supreme Court, and the Congress itself.

To enable the NHPRC to act on its judgments of what needs to be done, the Congress empowered it to recommend grants. The Archivist of the United States makes the grants--there were 133 in 1991--out of Federal appropriations. Through Fiscal Year 1993, appropriations up to $10 million per year are authorized for NHPRC grants. For Fiscal Year 1992, the actual Congressional appropriation was $5.4 million.

In real dollars (adjusted for inflation), the Fiscal Year 1992 appropriation is less than the Congress appropriated for NHPRC grants in 1980. In 1992, the NHPRC appropriation would have had to be more than $6.8 million to be equivalent in value to its $4 million appropriation twelve years ago.

But the needs have escalated. For example, between Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991, grant applications to the NHPRC increased by 21%. Preliminary indications in Fiscal Year 1992 are that the volume of applications continues to rise.

Highly meritorious projects are included in these present and prospective applications. Will future appropriations be adequate to enable the Commission to continue to help editors in Wisconsin complete publication of papers documenting the ratification of the Constitution of the United States? Will the Commission have grant funds to respond to applications from West Virginia to meet needs identified in the current NHPRC-supported survey of that state's historical records? Will grants remain available to help localities preserve historical records--grants such as those the NHPRC has been making nationwide from Fairfax County, Virginia, to Orange County, California?

Recognizing that care must be taken to make the most effective use of available resources, the NHPRC, in consultation with historians, archivists, and documentary editors in the field, has prepared a plan for meeting documentary needs.

What Is In The NHPRC's Plan?

The plan identifies five broad goals as most in need of attention. The goals are equal in priority; progress is needed on all five fronts. Under those goals, the plan calls for action on seventeen objectives, which the Commission has ranked in four levels of priority. Annual appropriation levels will determine how far the Commission can go towards reaching those objectives, and how many of them the Commission can attempt to reach. The five broad goals follow:

In the 1980s and early 1990s, the NHPRC made 52 grants to help U.S. states and territories assess their historical records. In the aggregate, the surveys paint a dismal picture of records neglect and inaccessibility. Moreover, 36 of 37 state archivists surveyed early in 1992 reported suffering cuts in their most recent budget cycles. Yet state archives share with the National Archives major responsibility for the preservation of records documenting the country's development. Documentary progress in America depends on strengthening them. Therefore one goal of the plan is this:

To Assure the Preservation of the Nation's Documentary Heritage through State Collaborative Efforts.

As the former Soviet Union breaks up, many citizens of the now-separate nations hope to change their governments into democracies, and they look to the United States for guidance. Yet Americans themselves still do not have full access to the documentary record of their nation's founding, nor documentary histories of a wide range of other formative developments in the American experience. Therefore one of the plan's goals is this:

To Assure the Nation's People of Published Documentation of Both Common and Diverse Elements of Their Historical Experience.

A major "Historical Documents Study" funded by the NHPRC reports that progress in documentary publishing depends upon coming to terms with several issues, such as the impact of new technologies, changing definitions of historical evidence, shifting interests among researchers, and institutional support. Therefore another goal of the plan is this:

To Improve Conditions for the Creation and Use of Documentary Editions.

In recent years, a half-dozen studies, including one financed by the NHPRC, and another published by a Congressional committee, have warned that archivists are in danger of being overwhelmed by electronic records, which are unstable, easily erased, and may depend for accessibility upon hardware and software that have become obsolete. Another recent NHPRC-funded study shows that many obstacles remain even for researchers who need to locate and use traditional, paper records. Still other studies cite needs for archival preservation, planning, training, and evaluation. Such needs receive attention in the NHPRC plan under this goal:

To Achieve Progress in the Preservation and Use of Original Source Material.

Many historical records are not saved simply because people fail to recognize their value. Many Americans lack awareness that without historical documents there can be, in effect, no history. Lack of awareness results in meager support for records work from both public and private sources. Yet documentary progress at every level depends upon such support. Therefore a critical goal of the plan is this:

To Generate Public Support for an Accessible Historical Record.

How Can We Progress Towards the Goals?

Using its grant-making authority, the NHPRC will achieve its goals by funding projects with the following specific objectives, which are listed under each goal in priority order:

Goal: To Assure the Preservation of the Nation's Documentary Heritage through State Collaborative Efforts.

Objective 1. To strengthen the efforts of state historical records coordinators and boards by offering grants for creating and updating state strategic plans for meeting records needs, based on the previous state assessments, and encompassing both documentary preservation and publication.

Objective 2. To help local organizations preserve records and make them accessible by providing grants to state historical records coordinators and boards for state regrants.

Objective 3. To continue the current cooperative agreement whereby the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators informs the Commission on needs and progress nationally.

Objective 4. To collaborate with the states to promote archival and records management by and among state and local governments.

Goal: To Assure the Nation's People of Published Documentation of Both Common and Diverse Elements of Their Historical Experience.

Objective 1. To bring to completion within the next twenty years nine present projects that document the formation of basic American political institutions—editions of the papers of Adams, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, and Washington, and papers on the ratification of the Constitution, the First Federal Congress, the early Supreme Court, and the beginnings of U.S. foreign relations.

Objective 2. To bring to completion within the next twenty years 36 present, Commission-funded projects that help document a range of historical subjects including the history of American women, the history of minority groups, and historical developments during and after the founding era.

Objective 3. To assist new documentary projects, in various forms of publication, that help teachers improve history education and that help researchers pursue significant lines of inquiry in historical scholarship, as determined in consultation with the Organization of American Historians, the American Historical Association, and the American Association for State and Local History.

Goal: To Improve Conditions for the Creation and Use of Documentary Editions.

Objective 1. Through matching grant offers and other means, to develop consortia and centers to edit documents, deal with documentation problems, raise funds for projects, share equipment and staff, and provide training as well as editing.

Objective 2. In collaboration with the Association for Documentary Editing, to help editors resolve issues and improve techniques, tools, media, training, and standards for documentary editing.

Objective 3. To increase document use by teachers, students, scholars, and the public.

Goal: To Achieve Progress in the Preservation and Use of Original Source Material.

Objective 1. To carry out the recommendations in the report of the Working Meeting on Research Issues in Electronic Records.

Objective 2. To increase access to and use of records, based on recommendations in the reports of the Historical Documents Study and the Society of American Archivists' Task Force on Goals and Priorities.

Objective 3. To help carry out the national agendas for archival progress put forward by the Society of American Archivists and the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, with particular attention to needs for preservation, planning, training, and institutional self-evaluation.

Goal: To Generate Public Support for an Accessible Historical Record.

Objective 1. To publish an annual "State of the American Record" report to identify needs, establish priorities, and gauge progress, using indices both qualitative and quantitative and regular channels of communication about needs from the field.

Objective 2. To increase financial contributions for documentary preservation and publication from private foundations, corporate donors, host institutions, state and local governments, and other organizations that might be persuaded by the availability of NHPRC funds to contribute more of their own.

Objective 3. To increase support for records work from a broad community of beneficiary parties--archivists, documentary editors, historians, patriotic organizations, state and local government officials, lawyers, jurists, educators, journalists, genealogists, local historians, historic preservationists, museum curators, and others with responsibility for historical records or with the need to use them.

Objective 4. To increase even more broadly the attention of the general public to the benefits of historical documentation.

What Will the Plan Cost?

The following chart shows the Commission's estimates of the annual and total costs over the remaining six years of the 1990s of carrying out the plan. The chart also shows the Commission's estimates of what it would cost to try to meet all first priority objectives, all second priority objectives, and so on, illustrating how much the Commission can do at different levels of funding. Projected costs rise over the six years of the plan because of anticipated inflation and because time will be needed to develop some programs for meeting objectives.

fiscal year	cost of all 1st priority objectives	cost of all 2nd priority objectives	cost of all 3rd and 4th priority objectives	total by year
1994	$ 3,525,000	$ 5,015,000	$ 3,725,000	$12,265,000
1995	$ 3,586,000	$ 5,165,000	$ 4,560,000	$13,311,000
1996	$ 4,390,000	$ 5,395,000	$ 5,215,000	$15,000,000
1997	$ 4,540,000	$ 5,330,000	$ 5,550,000	$15,420,000
1998	$ 6,200,000	$ 5,815,000	$ 8,025,000	$20,040,000
1999	$ 6,555,000	$ 5,300,000	$ 8,695,000	$20,550,000
six year total	$28,796,000	$32,020,000	$35,770,000	$96,586,000

What Will The Plan Achieve?

What are the ultimate outcomes--what would Americans get from implementation of the proposed plan?

From first priority objectives:

* Solid information every year on whether or not progress is adequate in saving the records that document American history and making them accessible;

* Published documentation of the creation of our nation and the thinking of its founders;

* A plan in every state for making the best use of available resources to preserve and make available the most important state and local historical records;

* Research results that will help people concerned with records preservation at all levels to cope successfully with electronic records;

* Stronger private-public collaboration in support of documentary editing.

From second priority objectives:

* Increased private financial support for the preservation and publication of the nation's documentary heritage;

* Published documentation on historical persons and developments representing the range of American history;

* Less threatened, more accessible state and local historical records;

* Easier access for scholars and others to the historical records they need;

* Better tools, techniques, training, and standards for documentary editing.

From third priority objectives:

* Appreciation and support for records preservation and publication from the wide range of groups that benefit from it;

* More published documents for scholars to use in pursuing major lines of inquiry in American history and for teachers to use in enlivening history education;

* Better information on records needs across the states and what to do to meet them;

* Better service from archives and archivists through better planning, training, and institutional self-evaluation;

* Better public understanding of history through increased use of original source materials by teachers, students, scholars, and citizens at large.

From fourth priority objectives:

* Broadened public understanding of the public right to a full, accurate, accessible documentary record and appreciation of its many uses and benefits;

* Better care of local government records.

These are the things that the Commission can achieve if it has adequate resources. The plan provides for continuing assessment of needs and adjustment of objectives. Above all, the plan reaffirms the Commission's role of coordinating efforts nationally to meet documentation needs economically, efficiently, and effectively.

For additional information or copies of the plan in detail, please call or write:

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Mr. CONDIT. Mr. George, I just would like you to tell me a little bit about the private funds and the public fund mix. I know there are some private funds that come in. Can you kind of explain that for us, please.

Mr. GEORGE. Yes, sir. I would be very happy to.

As Dr. Peterson said, NHPRC works in partnership with other organizations in doing what it does, and that partnership includes funding partnerships. Funding partnerships take place in four ways. One of them is that we receive—we have received from private foundations ourselves at NHPRC grant money to help support some programs, some training programs that we operate.

A second way is that we have actively helped grantees raise money in the private sector. We have raised—helped them to raise some $4 million, as a matter of fact. What frequently happens is that a project will get a grant from us. We will go with them to private sources to help them raise the remainder of the money that they need for the project.

I was once the head of an organization that had that kind of assistance from NHPRC and it was extremely helpful. We do that a lot.

Another way is that we leverage Federal funds through matching grants, particularly with State archives, State archival authorities. We have several programs around the country now in which we are providing matching moneys. State legislatures have come up with matching funds.

This has happened in New York, in Florida, in Wisconsin, in Kentucky, several States. State legislatures match our money for local regrant programs to help State and local governments and private institutions with their historical resources.

Another way is that we give preference in making grants to institutions that show high-cost sharing in their budgets. For example, there has been a lot of controversy about the payment of indirect costs by Federal granting agencies, the payment of overhead percentages to institutions that are receiving grants. We expect as a matter of policy and a matter of course our grantees to cover overhead themselves and not to submit claims to us for indirect costs.

In sum, Mr. Chairman, we fund less than half on the average of the costs of the projects that have our support. More than half comes from the institutions themselves and from private or other funders.

Mr. CONDIT. How does the NHPRC deal with or address the new information technology that is out there today?

Mr. GEORGE. The Commission has been concerned for some time about the new information technologies, about the possibilities of sending material through CD–ROM and electronic networks rather than in printed volumes or in the traditional forms. The Commission very recently supported a conference on electronic records issues out of which came a set of recommendations that worked their way into our strategic plan for the future and now comprise the research agenda that we will be funding if we are reauthorized.

NHPRC in the meantime has made a major grant to the University of Pittsburgh for research in this area. We are going—it will be a high priority for us in the future in addition to the activity we have supported in the past.

We regard this as critical for the future of historic records preservation because so much of the material that historians in the next century will need, in order to understand us and our time, will be in records that are generated electronically, so we are working very hard to try to help archivists preserve and make that material accessible.

Mr. CONDIT. Dr. Peterson, the agency has gone through some difficulties here of late. Can you describe what your biggest challenge is at this point?

Dr. PETERSON. Well, I would really echo Jerry George. One of the biggest issues facing the archival profession today—and the National Archives is no exception—is the issue of electronic records. We in the National Archives are committed to aggressively pursuing solutions to the problems of electronic records.

We have commissioned two expert studies so far. One of them recommended through panel of experts data bases that we should take in. We are taking those in. We have commissioned another study through the National Academy of Sciences on data bases of science. Those panels are meeting in the second week of July.

We are indeed committed to a closer working relationship with OMB and with our client agencies. We are looking to the outside archival organizations sponsored by NHPRC to help us. And of course we are very interested in the views of the staff of this subcommittee as well in arriving at answers to those questions, but that is the challenge today.

Mr. CONDIT. Thank you.

At this point I would like to yield to Mr. Thomas. We appreciate Mr. Thomas coming over. We know that he has other obligations, so if you have an opening statement you would like to read or submit for the record, please feel free to do so.

Mr. THOMAS. I have more of an apology than anything, Mr. Chairman. I am sorry I was late. I had an appointment with Dick Cheney and it took a little longer than I had thought.

Both Dr. Peterson and Mr. George have been kind enough to come and visit. I think I am fairly familiar with this reauthorization. It seems to me that it is something that we need to do. The preservation of these records are vital, I think, to our operations in our society.

I think we do constantly need to reevaluate in terms of whose responsibility it is to keep them out in the country and in the States and so on, but I am satisfied that what we are doing now is a useful program, Mr. Chairman. I am supportive of the proposition to reauthorize NHPRC.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Thomas follows:]

CRAIG THOMAS
WYOMING, AT LARGE

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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-5001

OPENING STATEMENT
CONGRESSMAN CRAIG THOMAS (R-WY)

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INFORMATION, JUSTICE, TRANSPORTATION AND AGRICULTURE OF THE HOUSE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

JUNE 23, 1993

Thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing regarding efforts to reauthorize the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). I look forward to hearing the testimony of the witnesses.

Preservation and research of our nation's history is extremely important. The NHPRC plays a vital role in our effort to preserve our heritage and allow future generations to have access to this important data. In addition, the NHPRC provides scholars, legislators, journalists and many others with precise, accessible records regarding American history.

Unlike many federal agencies, the NHPRC is closely involved with state and local communities across the country. NHPRC grants have assisted archives, historical societies, and local governments across the nation. Normally, these grants are used as seed money to encourage other public and private donors to fund projects. On the average, NHPRC grants constitute less than half of the overall budget for most projects it supports.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to thank you for introducing H.R. 2139, which reauthorizes the NHPRC through 1998, and for holding this hearing today. I look forward to working with you on this bill and hope it will receive prompt attention in the Congress.

Mr. CONDIT. Mrs. Thurman.

Mr. Horn.

Mr. HORN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am delighted to hear the testimony of the Commission. I am well familiar with your work. My first book was written partly in the National Archives; my fourth in the State archives.

I served on Mayor Bradley's commission as to the archival disposal of the Robert F. Kennedy records for the assassination in Los Angeles, and I created a university archive at California State University at Long Beach. I am all for archivists.

I have two questions and you have covered I think one. I would like your sense where we are nationally on the preservation of the records in terms of their decomposition and is the Library of Congress the primary lead agent in this or can the Archives also be involved?

Mr. GEORGE. Are you talking about the physical preservation?

Mr. HORN. Yes. In other words, the deterioration of records, though, especially after 1830 or so given the change in paper.

Mr. GEORGE. Oh, yes. Well, there has been an enormous amount of work on trying to convert records that are where the paper is very acidic and in jeopardy to more permanent forms of preservation. A great deal of this has been done with respect to books and the Library of Congress has been heavily involved there and a lot of that has been funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

We have been dealing more with original documents and sources rather than the book material, but there are a whole range of preservation issues with which the Commission has been dealing through its grants.

A lot of the specific grants are for preservation surveys to determine whether or not material is being kept under conditions that will prevent its deterioration and to get material under conditions that will ensure it will be taken care of.

I think in terms of national effort, the National Archives certainly has been a leader in the preservation of material, and Dr. Peterson may want to say some words about that.

Dr. PETERSON. I do.

First of all, yes, the Library of Congress is a very important agency in preservation. What we try to do is work with the Library of Congress so we don't duplicate efforts, but instead we spring from each other's effort and move forward more quickly.

They have certainly taken the lead on the issue of preservation of bound volumes and the deacidification problem. We have been looking at the deacidification question ourselves for unbound materials.

I would say a couple of things. First of all, we have an annual preservation conference. It is open to the public. In general, we try to get the papers given at that conference published.

Second, we ourselves publish from our research technical information papers that are available through the National Technical Information Service to anybody who wants them.

Third, we do a good deal of direct consulting. People call us. We also send people out. We do training courses and have big preservation components within them. What we try to look at is the wide

variety of media and make sure that we are taking as much care with motion picture film as with our 18th century materials.

Mr. HORN. Is there anything else we ought to be doing to involve, say, universities, State and local governments with the national efforts in this area or do you feel this is adequately being done by the Library of Congress' leadership in the area?

Dr. PETERSON. I would say to you that the Library of Congress has certainly done a fine job in the area of book preservation. I think the National Archives' role here is to work with the States, especially with State archives and through the Commission to try to foster other solutions for materials that are not book material and that is where I think we have to go.

I think we have to look at it ever more critically. I am very concerned about things like the preservation of video from television. We don't really know what we are saving out of the broadcasts. In the national television broadcasts, we have a pretty good sense of what is being saved, but with all the local TV channels we really don't know what the solution is for picking up and retaining some of those images. Yet some of the local news broadcasts are the most important imagery we are going to have in the late 20th century.

That is one area in which we have got to get people together and start saying "What are we going to do about preserving local TV news or it is going to be written off for this generation?"

Mr. HORN. I agree with you there. That is a really overlooked aspect. The Purdue Archive, as fine as it is, is simply inadequate for scholars when you are looking for the content of the whole hearing.

I remember ordering various reels from them and they cut off network television to ads instead of having the deposits of public television which covered it gavel to gavel. This type of thing, you just wonder are those lost forever or what is going to happen.

The second question is on secrecy. General Marshall's book is a good example. What is your sense nationally when you are funding these various projects to the degree that we still have at least at the Federal level, maybe there are some at other levels for other reasons, material that is classified that scholars cannot get at, and it is archival material primarily such as the correspondence here of General Marshall?

Was there anything that is still not available of his correspondence from say the Second World War?

Mr. GEORGE. I don't know about that specifically. In the case of the Marshall papers, there is still a great deal of material that is classified and in fact, Trudy, you just made an initiative, I believe, with the administration on declassifying.

Dr. PETERSON. On the issue of security classification, we in the National Archives are very actively participating in the attempt to write a new Executive order to declassify more documents. I believe absolutely that the declassification should be sped up and should be greatly expanded. The ultimate classification should be greatly reduced, and we in the National Archives are doing everything we can inside the executive branch to try to promote the idea that a real secret is what we need to keep secret and the others should be released to public view.

Mr. HORN. Having been in Army Reserves strategic intelligence and having spent three summers at the Pentagon, I was bemused

at a very young age how the New York Times can be classified as top secret. That actually happened, so I have a very jaundiced view of classification methods.

Should we have a standard on this to automatically declassify and the burden of proof should be on those who want to retain a certain document? Would that speed up the declassification process?

Dr. PETERSON. I believe that it is very important that this government have what I call a "drop-dead" date and that if anything is to remain classified beyond that, it should be done only after very sincere review and a weighing of the burdens between keeping it closed and the public's right to know. I think those should be very tightly drawn.

Mr. HORN. Well, Mr. Chairman, I think there might be an area for this committee to look into in terms of the overclassification that still exists in the Federal Government and how we can get a criteria where, as you suggested, you have a drop-dead date or what we might charitably and euphemistically call a sunset date in the terms of Congress where these records are automatically available and if some agency wants to continue to classify, they have to make a real effort to tell us why rather than have everything go through the real effort which becomes a noneffort. I think we ought to be looking at some of that.

Mr. CONDIT. I appreciate that, Mr. Horn. I understand some of that is being reviewed in other committees as well, and we will take a look at that.

If it is OK, we would like to move since we have a quorum, we would like to move to the business meeting, and we thank both of you for being here. If you will wait just a few moments, we will finish this, I think, and if anyone else has any questions, I will let them direct them to you so maybe just keep your seat for a moment.

[Recess taken.]

Mr. CONDIT. I will ask if any members have any additional comments or questions for Dr. Peterson or Mr. George?

Thank you folks for being here today. We appreciate it very much.

Mr. GEORGE. We thank you very much.

Mr. CONDIT. I might say we do have some questions we would like to submit to you and ask that you respond in writing if you will.

This hearing is adjourned.

Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 10:45 a.m., the subcommittee adjourned, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

National Archives

National Historical Publications and Records Commission *Washington, DC 20408*

July 9, 1993

The Honorable Gary A. Condit
Chairman
Subcommittee on Information, Justice, Transportation, and Agriculture
of the Committee on Government Operations
House of Representatives
Congress of the United States
B-349-C Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Condit:

Enclosed please find our answers to the questions posed in your letter of June 24. The questions touch on truly significant concerns for our operations and for the future of documentary progress in America. We are grateful for such questions, and we will gladly respond further if desired.

Let me add that the Commission and I are also grateful for your sponsorship of NHPRC's reauthorization, for your leadership in securing approval of H.R. 2139 from your subcommittee, and for the opportunities we have had to explain our proposals for future progress to you and to your very knowledgeable staff.

Thank you for your interest in preserving America's history.

Sincerely,

Gerald George
executive director

copy:
Dr. Trudy Huskamp Peterson
Acting Archivist of the U.S.
Acting Chairperson of the NHPRC

1. How is NHPRC addressing new information technology?

NHPRC is addressing new information technology with a two-pronged approach. One emphasis is on addressing issues relating to how new information technology is changing the nature of the archival record, namely the impact of automation on the content of archives. The second emphasis is on promoting ways in which new information technology can be used to provide more effective access to and preservation of archival records, manuscript materials, and documentary collections. NHPRC's strategic plan calls for the Commission to support activities that address both these information technology-related issues.

NHPRC's *Research Issues in Electronic Records* and *Electronic Records Guidelines* promote the development of the knowledge, tools, and experience that will lead to successful methods to preserve and provide access to archival electronic records. One of the five first-priority objectives in the Commission's strategic plan is to support projects that carry out the recommendations in *Research Issues in Electronic Records*. On the other hand, archivists, manuscripts curators, and historians who propose to use information technology to better administer archival materials (for example, by providing enhanced access), would be assisted under a different objective of the plan. For example, a project that seeks to reformat records into electronic form (e.g., to digitize textual, visual, or audio materials) for increased access would be considered under the level-two objective of the plan, "to increase access to and use of records, based on recommendations in the reports of the Historical Documents Study and the Society of American Archivists's Task Force on Goals and Priorities."

This useful distinction provides a framework under which NHPRC views new information technology and its impact on the documentary record. Much of the Commission's work has been directed towards the first area of emphasis—archival electronic records issues. The Commission, however, is actively involved in supporting and promoting a number of activities which use or explore the use of new information technologies.

a. Is the Commission supporting the dissemination of historical records using computer disk, CD-ROM, or other electronic formats. Please provide specific examples if possible. If not, what is the Commission doing to explore or encourage electronic dissemination.

In the documentary editing community, discussions about disseminating historical documents in electronic form have increased as technical obstacles have been addressed. To put this discussion in context, it should be noted that only 14 years ago the Commission began a program of encouraging the use of computers by its documentary editing projects. By 1985, the Commission estimated that 85 percent of its editing projects were using automated techniques for a variety of tasks including submitting text on computer disks to publishers. Several projects are in the process of actually putting transcribed documents onto CD-ROM (in addition to producing book and microfilm editions). These include the five "Founding Fathers" projects (Thomas Jefferson at Princeton University, Benjamin Franklin at Yale University, John Adams at the Massachusetts Historical Society, and James Madison and George Washington at the University of Virginia) and the Lincoln Legal Papers project at the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. Several years ago computer industry leader David Packard proposed a CD-ROM version of the "Founding Fathers" papers, which is now supported through his Packard Humanities Institute. In addition, NHPRC contributes partial support for the work of the project editors, work which provides the content for all of the products (book, microfilm, and CD-ROM), thus indirectly promoting the creation of the CD-ROM.

To date, only transcribed documents appear on CD-ROM. The projects must negotiate with their publishers before they will be able to include the considerable annotations and other narrative material which appear in the printed volumes. (This situation is directly related to the issue of copyright, which is discussed in part I.c.) It should be noted that the editors also have experienced hardware and software problems. At the present time, the "Founding Fathers" CD-ROM is available only on the IBYCUS, a computer developed for another project (the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae) and designed for use by classical scholars. There are only about 400 IBYCUS computers in the country (most of which are in university classics departments), thus severely limiting access. In the future, the projects plan to convert the software, so that the CD-ROM will run on any IBM-compatible or Macintosh computer with a CD-ROM drive. Nevertheless, this situation highlights the practical problems projects face when they adopt an emerging technology that lacks clearly defined standards.

The plans for the Lincoln Legal Papers project diverge somewhat from those of the "Founding Fathers" CD-ROM. In addition to a selective book edition, the project editors will produce a comprehensive facsimile edition on CD-ROM. The CD-ROM product will contain images of the documents, not transcriptions or annotations. This project will be the first assisted directly by the Commission for such an activity.

The Commission is also exploring possibilities for electronically disseminating the products of the editorial projects it assists over on-line networks such as BITNET or over the Internet. A key question raised in this regard is whether the Commission should strongly urge or require, through conditions placed on its grantees, editorial projects to make their products available electronically via a network and, if so, by what vehicle should this be done. Two possible options are: 1) the Commission could include funds in a grant for the sponsoring institution, usually a university with a port on the Internet, to put the documents up on its server, or 2) the Commission could consider funding a center that would post all Commission-assisted documentary editions. In the coming year, the Commission is committed to exploring these issues with the various constituents affected by such an enterprise, including presses, editors of documentary materials, and other Federal funding agencies.

In addition to assisting the documentary editing projects cited above, NHPRC is also an active participant in an *ad hoc* "Federal Funders Group," comprised of representatives from Federal funding agencies that make grants relating to archival, library, and other primary research materials. In addition to representatives from NHPRC, participants include staff from the Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the National Science Foundation. The focus of these meetings has been on common concerns relating to the use of electronic media for the preservation of and access to these materials. As a result of its discussions, the group decided that a collaborative strategy, involving a common set of principles, should be developed. Within the month, a draft of those principles should be sent out for public review via a number of appropriate network listservs and users groups. The principles specifically address grant proposals for projects that involve the use of information technology to capture and make available primary research collections. Applicants and reviewers will be able to use the principles for proposal development and evaluation. The Commission feels it is important to explore and encourage electronic dissemination of historical documents in conjunction with other Federal funding agencies.

Discussions and activities concerning the dissemination of historical documents through the use of new information technologies are occurring in the archival and manuscripts community. Historically, NHPRC's emphasis has been on promoting the dissemination of information about archival and manuscript materials through the creation of collection-level finding aids and guides. The Commission chose this tactic because it felt that it is more effective to describe the enormous amount of archival and

manuscript materials in existence at a general level than to describe in detail (e.g, at the item level) a very small portion of the whole. In the past, the Commission required that descriptions of collections processed with NHPRC assistance be sent to the *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections*. With the development of the MARC AMC (MAchine-Readable Cataloging Archival and Manuscripts Control) format and the cataloging standard *Archives, Personal Papers and Manuscripts*, the Commission now requires that projects receiving assistance for descriptive activities create MARC AMC records and enter them into one of the national bibliographic databases. Since 1984, (when archivists and librarians completed MARC AMC format development), NHPRC has provided nearly two million dollars in grant funds for over 20 projects to create or convert thousands of descriptions of archival and manuscript materials into electronic form.

There are additional reasons why NHPRC has taken a somewhat conservative approach to supporting projects that use information technology for the dissemination of archival documents. The Commission is as concerned about the long-term preservation of archival and manuscript materials as it is about access to those materials. Information technology, while capable of significantly increasing access, also introduces a host of long-term preservation problems. At this point in time, the Commission does not view optical disk technology as a long-term preservation medium because of the lack of standards, although having images on disk does decrease the wear on original documents from direct handling. Furthermore, the Commission understands the inherent risks in promoting technologies that lack adequate standards. Because of the technological obsolescence of the hardware and software used to access the documents, it is all too possible that projects could use scarce Federal dollars to produce products that will be unusable in the near future.

Nonetheless, the Commission has assisted two projects that produced videodiscs as "test cases." The Southwest Museum, in Los Angeles, received assistance to transfer photographic images to laser videodisc. This activity was one component of a cataloging project that provides online access and record keeping for the museum's photographic collection. The Oakland Museum in Oakland, California, also received NHPRC assistance to put over 40,000 photographic images on videodisc and held a workshop for museum, library, and archives personnel in the state to demonstrate the system and share experience gained during development and implementation.

NHPRC is committed to keeping informed about technological developments as well as to being open to possible new technological applications for documentary editing and records projects. For example, several university archives and special collections have begun to put their finding aids on the Internet via gopher servers. With support from the Commission on Preservation and Access, Cornell University recently completed a test to capture digitally and provide network access to archival documents. Other universities, including Penn State, are conducting similar tests. Cornell is currently promoting the concept of a larger project, "The Making of America: 1860-1960," which would digitize 100,000 books and primary source materials and provide network access to them. If NHPRC had adequate appropriations, the Commission could provide more active support for projects to explore such technological innovations in efficient and effective ways. These types of activities are supported by NHPRC's long-range plan. What is needed is additional funding.

b. Would it be possible to collect basic documents in electronic format and make them permanently available through computer networks such as the Internet? For example, the NHPRC or NARA could establish a network server offering historical documents that have been collected and edited by grantees. This facility could be provided in addition to or in place of printed publications. A permanent collection of historical papers of the founding fathers, presidents, the Congress, famous citizens, and others would be accessible throughout the United States and the world through the Internet. Can the NHPRC help to create such a collection?

It would be possible. In fact, NARA plans to become an Internet node to be available through ICASS (Integrated Communications and Administrative Support System), which is NARA's backbone computer system. Network access should be available when NARA staff move to Archives II in November 1993. Currently, over 200 NARA employees, including eleven Commission staff members, have Internet e-mail addresses through an interagency agreement with the National Institutes of Health. Some NARA offices already have information available through network servers. NARA's Internet access through ICASS will provide NARA staff in Archives I and II with the full functionality of the Internet (e-mail, FTP, and telnet). In preparation for these network opportunities, NARA has formed an Internet Access Committee; NHPRC staff member Lisa Weber is on the committee. Through three subcommittees, NARA is exploring policy and use issues, technical implementation, and user education and training. One subcommittee activity that is currently underway is the identification, NARA-wide, of possible information to make available through the Internet. In addition to providing information about Commission guidelines, reports, and press releases, NHPRC's list includes putting historical documents from documentary editing projects on NARA's network server.

While the Commission is enthusiastic about exploring the possibility of providing this kind of access, it is also investigating whether or not the projects themselves may be more appropriate agents to provide this service. Most documentary editing projects are on university campuses that already have Internet access. Moreover, the Commission does not have the staff to develop and maintain such an activity. NHPRC's role could be one of helping to create network access to a collection of significant documents by providing grant support to others to undertake the initiative. The Commission could also strongly urge or require its assisted projects to explore network access.

c. When network access is provided in the future, it is possible that existing restrictions (such as copyright) might interfere with the electronic availability of basic documents. The same restrictions could interfere with dissemination on CD-ROM or other media as well. Can the Commission require some or all of its grantees to agree to unrestricted electronic dissemination as a condition of receiving support?

Under the terms of the Copyright Revision Act of 1976, all manuscript material is under copyright until the year 2003 or 50 years after the death of the author, whichever is later. The basic documents involved in most NHPRC-assisted editorial projects, whether microfilm or book editions, fall into the latter category and could legally be readily made available. The papers of the "Founding Fathers"—the most often-used examples of likely material to be disseminated electronically—fall into this category. The papers of Martin Luther King, Jr., an editing project currently assisted by the Commission, are documents not in the public domain. The copyright statement in the recently published first volume of the King series clearly states that copyright of Dr. King's writings resides with his estate: "Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr., © copyright 1992 by the Estate of Martin Luther King., Jr. Introduction, editorial footnotes, and apparatus © copyright 1992 by the Martin Luther King, Jr., Papers Project. © copyright 1992 by the Regents of the University of California." Basic documents such as these could not be made available electronically without waiver of copyright by whoever holds it. It is not within the editor's prerogative to waive copyright protection for the documents with which his or her project deals. Traditionally, documentary editors have secured permission to use documents from the heirs of their subjects.

Documentary editions—printed or microfilmed collections of documents that have been gathered together, selected, transcribed, edited, and annotated—are almost always copyrighted and the copyright can be held by a variety of combinations of individuals or entities, including the editor, a subject individual's estate, the editorial project, the sponsoring institution, or the press. The copyright statement in the King volume demonstrates the variety of holders of copyright that may be involved in a single edited volume. Copyright statements can be very specific. The statement in volume one of the Thomas Edison papers,

another project assisted by the Commission, not only notes that copyright is held by the sponsoring institution, Rutgers University, but specifically forbids electronic dissemination of the material within: "No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means—graphic, electronic, mechanical, or chemical, including photocopying, recording or taping, or information storage and retrieval systems—without permission of Rutgers, The State University, New Brunswick, New Jersey."

The widely held notion that written materials—annotations, for example—produced with the support of public money are automatically in the public domain is erroneous. Almost all of the edited volumes produced with Commission support are copyrighted. However, under the terms of the copyright law (Title 17, U.S. Code), Congress expressly gave discretion to Federal funding agencies to determine whether written materials produced by their grantees should be placed in the public domain. Federal regulations and an Office of Management and Budget Circular (36 CFR 1207 and Office of Management and Budget Circular A-110) enable these agencies to place copyright restrictions on the recipients of Federal funds. Thus, the Commission could place requirements for unrestricted electronic dissemination of the editor's annotations and other added material on grantees. It should be noted, however, that implementing such requirements would almost certainly diminish press interest in publishing documentary editions that would soon be made available electronically, since such dissemination would seriously erode sales potential.

The problem of requiring grantees to agree to the unrestricted electronic dissemination of their work is compounded by the fact that the Commission is rarely the sole funder of any editorial project. Projects generally seek and receive assistance from a variety of public and private sources. While the NHPRC could act unilaterally to require relinquishment of copyright for projects with multiple sources of funding, the Commission and other Federal funding agencies recognize the need to work in concert to develop uniform, consistent language regarding unrestricted electronic dissemination of the work of their grantees.

Restrictions on copyright could also not be made retroactive, and this raises still more questions. Most scholars would agree that the entire corpus of an individual's or organization's documents should be available in order for it to have optimal research value. Fragments are of little use. Most of the editorial projects assisted by the Commission have been in existence for several years, during which many have already published copyrighted volumes of selected, edited, and annotated documents. Others—both microfilm and book editions—have been completed in entirety. Even if future publications were to be electronically disseminated, what about those already in print and under copyright? A recent Commission study of sales histories for documentary book editions shows that sales after the first three years of publication are negligible. In light of this fact, perhaps publishers and editors might be willing to relinquish copyright on previously published volumes or editions. Perhaps not. Perhaps assurances that future volumes would not be electronically disseminated until after they had been marketed for three years would encourage presses to continue to publish ongoing documentary book editions. The most fruitful avenue to explore might well be with newer projects that have not yet gone to press with their first volume or microfilm edition, whose initial negotiations with publishers could include provisions for electronic dissemination.

2. *The NHPRC subsidizes the publication of scholarly volumes, many of which are purchased by libraries.*

a. Are NHPRC-supported publications distributed to any depository libraries or to regional depository libraries?

Since 1974, when the NHPRC began providing financial assistance for the publication of documentary editions, subvention grants totalling just $2,649,157 have helped 37 non-profit presses in 24 states publish

319 volumes. Libraries have been the major market for those NHPRC-assisted documentary editions, so at least some of the editions are availahle in at least some of the 1,400 libraries that are Federally designated as depositories for U.S. Government publications. But the libraries will have purchased the editions directly from the presses, whose production expenses are only partly covered by NHPRC subventions, and who handle the marketing and distribution of NHPRC-assisted documentary publications. Those editions are not U.S. Government publications, and therefore have not systematically been distributed through the depository-library system.

b. Would it be cheaper for everybody if the Commission used the subsidy to purchase the books directly from a publisher and donate the volumes to libraries?

In 1992, attracted by that possibility, NHPRC staff studied the potential cost-effectiveness of switching from direct press subsidies to negotiated purchases of books for depository-library distribution. We reasoned that if a press knew up front that we would buy 1,000 copies or more of a new volume, for distribution to depository libraries, the press might be willing to sell us volumes at the cost of production, and retrieve its overhead costs through its own, additional sales. We then applied cost-benefit analysis as follows.

At the time, presses were selling on the average 704 copies of each new documentary volume. On the average, it cost presses approximately $18,000 for composition, paper, printing, and binding to manufacture press-runs of 1,000 copies per new volume. Theoretically, if the NHPRC agreed up front to purchase 1,000 copies of a press-run for depository-library distribution, we could get the books for $18 each, which would enable the press to recover its unit manufacturing cost up front, avoid major costs for marketing, sales, and storage, and recover overhead by selling an addition to the press-run. NHPRC's cost would rise from the present $12,000 maximum subvention to $18,000—50 percent. Average distribution would rise from 704 copies to 1,000 copies—42 percent. If the press sold an additional 100 copies, total distribution would increase by 57 percent, which would be at least marginally cost effective. Cost effectiveness would go up if NHPRC limited its purchase program to documentary editions whose sales per volume had not exceeded 500-600 copies.

Two other possibilities seemed also to warrant investigation. One was to see how cheaply presses would sell stocks of early volumes in series that would be placed in depository libraries under an NHPRC purchase plan. Another was to include in the purchase plan copies for distribution to the 173-plus American Studies Research Centers and post libraries maintained by the USIA in foreign countries. Staff has initiated contact with the USIA to pursue the possibility of overseas distribution of at least the NHPRC-assisted editions that document the formation of American democratic institutions (editions in our "Documents for Democracy" program). And we sought advice about the other options from the non-profit publishers who served on our special panel to evaluate publishing subvention applications.

However, the subvention panel's unanimous advice was to pursue not some more efficient arrangement for distribution but a more efficient arrangement for publication itself—that is, to explore the possibilities that new technologies for the electronic transmission of information may have for increasing accessibility while reducing costs of both publication and distribution. The subvention panel observed that "in the recent past, the leadership of the Commission, with the approval of its oversight committees in academe and on Capitol Hill, successfully converted documentary editors to editing on computer. There is an opportunity now to work with editors and publishers in developing new publishing formats."

c. Could the publication of documentary editions on CD-ROM or other electronic media reduce the cost to libraries and other users? A single CD-ROM could easily accomodate a ten-volume (perhaps even 100-volume) series of documents.

That certainly seems to be an eventual if not an immediate possibility. As indicated in our response to other questions from our reauthorizing subcommittee, some of the documentary editors whose projects NHPRC assists are already putting material on CD-ROM. And as indicated above, our subvention panel encouraged us to explore such possibilities further, which we are doing. One of the five broad goals in the NHPRC's strategic plan for documentary progress in the 1990s is this:

> To assure the nation's people of published documentation of both common and diverse elements of their historical experience.

Under that goal, the Commission plans to bring to completion 44 documentary editing projects that it currently assists. Our specific objectives under that goal also include the following for fiscal year 1994 (particularly note the italics):

> . . . to complete, by the fiscal year's end, financial and other arrangements for *accelerating* publication of the [nine] founding-era projects . . . .
>
> . . . to complete by the June 1994 Commission meeting an assessment of costs, editorial requirements, schedules of benchmarks, and *publication alternatives* for bringing these [36 other] projects to completion . . . .
>
> . . . to complete by the end of the fiscal year an informal consultation with scholars and educators, in collaboration with OAH [Organization of American Historians], AHA [American Historical Association], and AASLH [American Association for State and Local History], and with teachers, and *experts on pertinent new technologies*, about future needs (*types of publications and modes of access* as well as subjects) for documentary publications . . . .

We have been grateful for encouragement in these pursuits from interested and knowledgeable staff of the House Subcommittee on Information, Justice, Transportation, and Agriculture. We would like to stay in close communication as we work towards our mutual goal of providing increased access to America's documentary heritage at less expense.

National Archives

Washington, DC 20408

JUL 13 1993

The Honorable Gary A. Condit
Chairman, Subcommittee on Information, Justice,
Transportation and Agriculture
Committee on Government Operations
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Condit:

In response to your letter of June 24, 1993, I have enclosed answers to your questions as supplement to my testimony on H.R. 2319.

If you or your staff have further questions, please contact John Constance at 501-5110.

Sincerely,

Trudy Huskamp Peterson

TRUDY HUSKAMP PETERSON
Acting Archivist
of the United States

Enclosure

Rep. Condit's Questions:

HOW IS NARA ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS OF ACCESSIONING, MAINTAINING AND EVENTUALLY DISSEMINATING ELECTRONIC RECORDS?

NARA is addressing these problems both in current operations and in future planning. The NARA Strategic Plan, published in February of this year, established a critical success factor for NARA to "aggressively pursue the National Archives and Records Administration's mission in all areas being impacted by changing information technology and electronic records." NARA has established a task force charged with developing a broad, long range strategy for dealing with electronic records. We intend this strategy to address the challenges posed by the epochal changes occurring in the technology used to record information.

In the interim, we are continuing several initiatives. They include a study of the appraisal of scientific data in electronic form, sponsored by NARA and undertaken by the National Academy of Science/National Research Council; a study of the use of optical disk systems in Federal agencies, undertaken by NARA's Technology Research Staff; active involvement in standards development though both NIST and ANSI; and collaboration with several interagency initiatives, including the Public Access Group, the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC), and OMB's Information Management Improvement Initiative (IMII). In connection with the IMII project, NARA is sponsoring a review of major automated systems included in OMB's Program for Priority Systems as a testbed for articulating ways that systems development and systems management methods can be adjusted to ensure that archival and records management requirements are satisfied. Also in the IMII project, NARA is collaborating with AID in its effort to move to a paperless office. In the FGDC, NARA representatives are working to ensure that standards and policies established by the FGDC address archival and records management requirements. In addition, in collaboration with the Library of Congress, we have succeeded in getting the FGDC to establish a Working Group on Historical Data. In the Public Access Group, and in special collaboration with OMB, NARA is promoting the establishment of an information locator system for Federal Government information holdings. Besides the direct benefit of enabling the public to learn what information agencies has, NARA sees an information locator system as a means of identifying Federal records which need to be scheduled and appraised.

WHAT ARE NARA'S CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND PLANS FOR THE CENTER FOR ELECTRONIC RECORDS?

Since its establishment in Fiscal Year 1989, the Center for Electronic Records (CER) has made significant progress in accessioning electronic records, as indicated in Table 1,

attached. This table shows that the quantity of electronic records, measured in physical files, increased tenfold in the first four years of the CER's existence. It has doubled again in the first three quarters of this fiscal year. CER accessioning efforts in FY 92 and 93 have focused in 2 areas, designated as the GAPS project and follow-up to the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) study of Federal databases.

In the GAPS project, CER staff have created a database which captures data on all items in records disposition schedules approved by NARA which designate electronic records as permanent. From this data, they have projected when such records should be transferred to the National Archives. This analysis showed that there are approximately 1,500 past due transfers, and slightly more than 200 transfers which should occur annually for the next five years. The Center has taken initiative to secure transfer of the past due records, concentrating on the oldest cases first. The current total of overdue transfers more than 10 years past due is 86.

NAPA undertook a study of major Federal databases at NARA's request. Of more than 12,000 identified, expert panels established by NAPA recommended in December, 1991, that the National Archives preserve records from 430. Staff of the CER subsequently initiated contacts with agencies to get them to schedule and transfer records from more than half of these databases. Agencies have scheduled 29 of the databases identified by NAPA, and have made 37 transfers, comprising 596 files, in accordance with these schedules.

Current operations themselves include an important component of planning for the future. The CER's efforts to preserve electronic records are built on the expectation of continuing technological change which will repeatedly make even the most durable media and the most widely used applications obsolete. The CER is developing three technologies which will help NARA to accommodate continuing change. The first is a preservation system. The CER distilled 20 years of experience preserving electronic records at the National Archives into a set of functional requirements for physical preservation. These requirements served as the basis for a contract, awarded competitively to a small business, for an integrated system specifically designed for archival preservation of digital files, regardless of content. We expect this system to function as a platform for substantial program enhancements. The most important immediate enhancement will be significant increases in productivity. In fact, a prototype of the system enabled the CER to accomplish a very high volume of preservation copying in a short time in connection with implementing the court's orders in the Armstrong v. EOP litigation. Over the long term, this system will provide a flexible base for expanding the media options which the National Archives can accept for transfer of records, and for coping with changing technology. As a by-product, we expect the preservation system to be easily adaptable to enable

the National Archives to expand the options offered to researchers for copies of electronic records.

The second system supports both accessioning and the preservation of databases with complex logical structures. The CER has designed and implemented this system to improve productivity and enable the National Archives to accession and preserve complex databases independently of the original software and hardware. The CER has outlined designs for phased enhancements of this system to increase both the complexity and variety of database structures that can be preserved and to enable NARA to maintain appropriate aspects of functionality in archival databases. This system automatically creates a database containing metadata about electronic records. This metadata both improves intellectual control over accessioned databases and constitutes a foundation for on-line access by researchers.

The CER is currently analyzing the requirements for a third system which will provide researchers with such on-line access to electronic records in the National Archives. In broad outline, this system will be the link between the Archival Information System, which will enable researchers to learn about records in the National Archives, and actual access to accessioned databases. The CER system is intended to support both on-site searching and retrieval of data in Archives II and transfer of data to remote users over networks.

The CER has other initiatives in development, including expanding options for transfer of electronic records to the National Archives to include CD-ROM, and expanding the types of electronic records which we can preserve and to which we can provide access.

ARE ADEQUATE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CENTER?

Since its establishment, the staffing of the Center for Electronic Records has grown from 17 to 42 FTE, and the budget has grown to over 2.5 million dollars. It is impossible to estimate precisely at this time the resources that are required, because the new computer systems described above are expected to have major, positive benefits on productivity. Estimating resource requirements is further complicated by the fact that certain aspects of the workload are not easily estimated. For example, the GAPS project allows us to project transfers of records, but we have no way to estimate the number of files which will be included in any transfer. This number is often determined by the way the agency effects the transfer to the National Archives, rather than the way they keep the records.

However, available resources are not adequate to accomplish everything that the Center might or should do. The experience of the last four and a half years has shown that, in effect, everything the Center accomplishes has the effect of raising the threshold at which the National Archives needs to operate. The

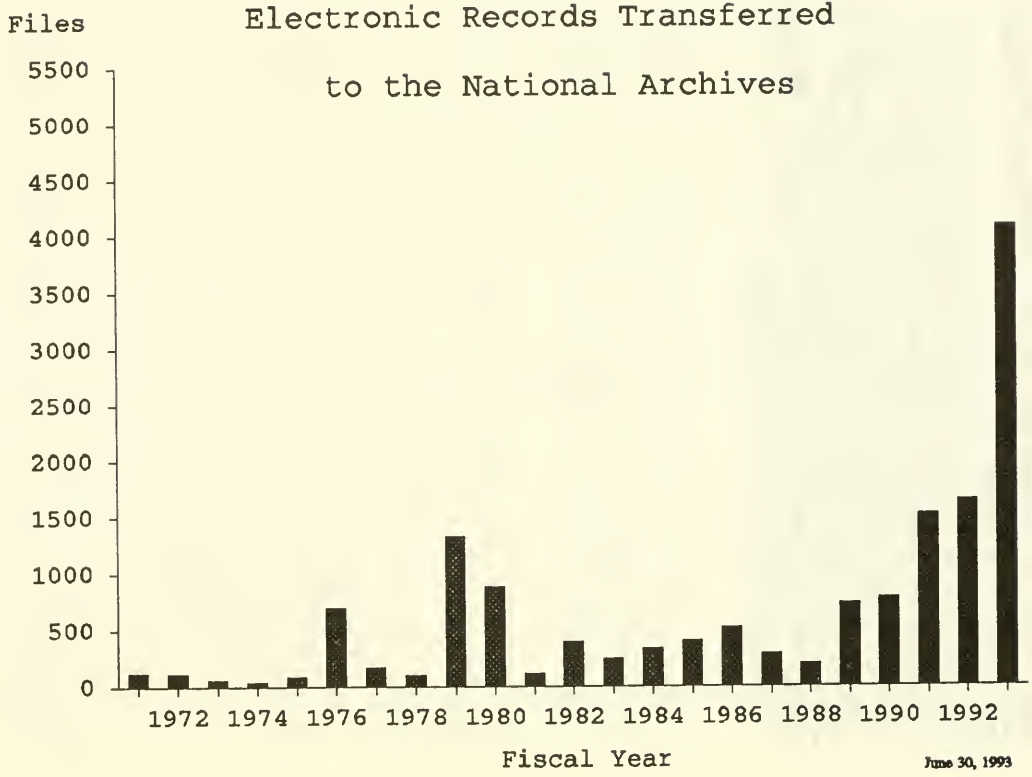
NAPA project, for example, has created a substantial workload in appraisal which, in turn, will increase the accessioning workload by at least an estimated 70%.

There are also unforeseeable developments which entail significant resources requirements. For example, work required to preserve and process the computer materials transferred to NARA in connection with the Armstrong v. EOP litigation has created a substantial demand on both staff and funds in the CER. Shifting resources to meet this demand has negative consequences on other parts of the Center's workload, including but not limited to the GAPS project, the processing of current accessions, development of the capability to accession data on CD-ROMs, and development of the ability to accession and preserve files from Geographic Information Systems.

Table 1

Electronic Records Transferred

to the National Archives



WHAT IS NARA DOING TO PROVIDE GENERAL GUIDANCE TO AGENCIES ABOUT THE PRESERVATION OF E-MAIL?

NARA is well aware of the need for agency guidance in the area of electronic mail and has provided such guidance in a variety of formats, including publications, regulations, General Records Schedules, staff consulting, and conference training sessions. The work that we have done in providing guidance to the Executive Office of the President in the Armstrong v. EOP case will in the near future be used as a basis to revise the current guidance.

At present, NARA publications with specific guidance on records management issues involving e-mail include Managing Electronic Records (1990); Personal Papers of Executive Branch Officials (1992); and Disposition of Federal Records (1992). These publications reflect the guidance and requirements in NARA regulations (36 CFR Parts 1222, 1228, and 1234). In addition, the General Records Schedules issued by NARA to provide mandatory disposition standards for records common to all agencies cover electronic messages (GRS 23, item 2). NARA staff members from our Office of Records Administration routinely work with individual agencies records managers to provide informal advice and assistance in applying these publications and regulations to their individual e-mail systems.

Finally, the annual National Archives Records Administration Conference, held in May of this year and attended by nearly 300 agency representatives, featured two relevant affinity group discussions: Recordkeeping Requirements and Comprehensive Scheduling, and Electronic Mail Systems.

DOES NARA HAVE AN INTERNAL E-MAIL FACILITY? IF SO, WHAT IS BEING DONE ABOUT PRESERVATION?

While the National Archives currently has a limited electronic message system between offices in the National Archives Building in Washington, DC, we do not have an electronic mail capability at the present time. With the November implementation of the ICASS System for the new National Archives at College Park (known as Archives II), we will for the first time have an electronic mail network that will link all of our Washington facilities with our other facilities across the country. As with all systems running on the new ICASS network, the NARA ADP Committee is currently reviewing the scheduling and preservation considerations for the new e-mail system. We will share our guidelines with the subcommittee as they are developed.

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